

NOTES

¹Taken from the preface of *Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 43, No. 3.

²Peter L. Goss, "The Architectural History of Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 43, No. 3. Also consulted were home buying statistics from an editorial in the Birmingham, Alabama, *Post-Herald*.

³Aird G. Merkley, ed., *Monuments to Courage: A History of Beaver County*, pp. 262-271, pub. by DUP of Beaver County, The Milford News Press.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 41, 42.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 189.

⁶Alvaretta Robinson and Daisy Gillins, eds., *They Answered the Call: A History of Minersville, Utah*, pp. 119, 120, pub. by Minersville Centennial Committee.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 160, 161. Sketches for the Beaver section supplied by Sharon Olpin, president, Beaver County Civic Arts Council.

⁹Victor L. Lindblad, *Biography of Samuel Bailey Mitton*.

¹⁰Clara Richards, *They Conquered by Faith*, pp. 105-107.

¹¹George Quincy Knowlton, *A History of Farmington, Utah*, p. 56, pub. in 1956, compiled and edited by Jennetta K. Robinson, 1965.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 45. Also consulted was *My Farmington*, by Margaret Steed Hess, pp. 312, 313.

¹³George Quincy Knowlton, *A History of Farmington, Utah*, p. 48. Also *My Farmington*, by Margaret Steed Hess, pp. 340, 341.

¹⁴Margaret Steed Hess, *My Farmington*, p. 347.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, also *A History of Farmington, Utah*, by George Knowlton.

¹⁶Kate B. Carter, *Our Pioneer Heritage*, vol. 14, pp. 252, 253. Picture submitted by Rose Andrus Brown.

¹⁷Russell Mortensen, *Early Utah Sketches*, p. 61, U of U Press.

¹⁸*The Deseret News* of Sept. 7, 1978.

¹⁹Lyman C. Pedersen, Jr., "Samuel Pierce Hoyt and His Home on the Weber," *Utah Historical Quarterly*, vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 99-108. Also information written by his granddaughter Mary Lucile Lee Ralph Carmichael.

Freighting in Utah



DAUGHTERS OF UTAH PIONEERS

* Freighters and Freighting



PERHAPS NO EVENT ever to take place in the West was of greater significance than that which occurred May 10, 1869, when the rails from the East and West were joined at Promontory, Utah, linking the Pacific and Atlantic oceans with a steel band.

Great celebrations were held—not only locally, but nationwide. Without doubt, it was one of the greatest accomplishments ever performed by mankind. Despite almost insurmountable obstacles—fatigue, lack of funds, rugged terrain and opposition to the enterprise—strong and determined men had finally realized a dream, and an easier and more reliable mode of travel opened the West to rapid colonization and growth.

At the same time, the splendid event marked the end of one era and the beginning of another, for no longer was it necessary for slow-moving oxen or horses and wagons to transport pioneers and their endless burdens westward. And in the years to come, as a gradually expanding network of railroads spread throughout the West, and motor vehicles made their appearance, the need for wagon travel came to an end.

And yet, in spite of the hardships endured prior to the advent of these miracles of modern transportation, many emigrant journals record expressions of nostalgia, pride and gratification at having played a part in freighting by wagon across the Plains to Utah, and in the subsequent movement of people and necessities within the confines of their newly settled territory. One pioneer freighter in Mt. Pleasant, Utah, eulogized: "Those were happy days of freighting. We camped in our wagons, cooked our meals on the campfire, and enjoyed it all."¹ The following pages present an intermixture of the comradeship, hardship and accomplishment that evoked such amiable memories.

—Louise B. Pearce

When mountain men set out to explore the American West in the 1820s, the only means by which they could get through the

rugged Rocky Mountains was by horse or mule, and unless pack animals were taken along, a rifle, ammunition, simple cooking utensils, scanty clothing and bedding were about all that could be carried. Despite this handicap, in the autumn of 1821 William Becknell and party left Franklin, Missouri, on a trading mission to the Southwest. In addition to their own animals and trappings, each eight men were provided with a pack horse, an axe and a tent. In November they reached Santa Fe—at that time still under Mexican rule—and sold their small stock of goods at an enormous profit. For this feat, Becknell was honored with the title "Father of the Santa Fe trade."²

The crafty trader, eager to enlarge his enterprise, decided to use wagons on future expeditions, and for eight years horse- or mule-drawn wagons increasingly ventured west of the Mississippi River, creating the road that became known as the Santa Fe Trail. It was not until 1829 that Major Bennett Riley, commander of the 1st Battalion of the 6th Infantry, in making preparations to provide an escort for the Santa Fe traders, decided to use oxen for the long journey. Although they had never before been used to draw wagons—it being supposed that they were too slow and could not pull as well as horses—Riley reasoned that they could be used as food, if necessary, and besides, no grain would need to be hauled, for oxen could subsist by grazing along the road. When it was found that besides these advantages, they were magnificent animals on the trail—strong and durable—



Typical Ox Team
—Courtesy of Utah Historical Society

they became the chief motive power for western travel for many years.³

In a similar manner trading missions began between the mountain men and Indians of the intermountain areas. Supplying themselves in St. Louis with trinkets, beads, knives, all of which were immensely attractive to Indians, the trappers, using pack animals, exchanged these goods for the valuable furs that were plentiful in the newly opened territory, realizing many times their investment when the furs were sold on the American market. As time went by and the fur business grew to enormous proportions, the gathering at which the trading was done became known as a "rendezvous." In his article entitled "Old Trails, Old Forts, Old Trappers and Traders,"⁴ Herbert S. Auerbach included an excellent account of these interesting and colorful events—the initial exchange of goods between the East and the Intermountain West:

"During the late 1820s and early 1830s the annual summer rendezvous was a splendid gathering, with many hundreds of Indians from all the friendly tribes swarming in to erect their wickiups in scattered clusters spreading a mile or more along the river bank. The traders and trappers usually brought their squaws to this great trading fair. The women often were bedecked in the gaudiest style for this event, with embroideries, beads, ribbons, red blankets and bright skirts, and with little bells jingling about their persons. Agents of the great fur companies were here to meet their own parties of trappers, and also to drive new contracts with the Free Trappers.

"At the rendezvous were goods in great variety to be bought at 'mountain prices.' For example, a pound of beaver skins might be paid for with four dollars worth of goods, but the goods themselves would be sold at enormous profit—a pint of coffee-beans, for example, two dollars, and a pint of sugar the same; a plug of chewing tobacco, one to two dollars; a pint of diluted alcohol, four dollars; guns and ammunition, bear traps, blankets, kerchiefs and gaudy finery for the squaws brought equal profits to the traders and agents.

"It was a week of great fun, with the trappers renewing old acquaintances and exchanging stories of their dangers and adventures during the past year, with the squaws engaging in gossip and their favorite gambling game of 'hand,' with Indians and whites drinking, gambling and bartering. There were horse races, foot races, wrestling, and contests in shooting—all the spontaneous sports that such a crowd of mountain men enjoyed on their yearly spree. And the feasting was continuous—the gorging of fresh-killed meat in incredible quantities leaving the men happy and relaxed, ready for horse-play and jokes.

"The second annual summer rendezvous was held in Ogden valley and the third on Bear Lake, near the present town of Laketown, Rich County, Utah. The sixth rendezvous, held on the Wind River, Wyoming, was notable for the sale of their interest in the fur trade by Smith, Jackson and Sublette to Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton G. Sublette, James Bridger, Henry Fraeb, and Jean Baptiste Gervais, who adopted the firm name of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. At this rendezvous, early in August 1830, the first wheeled vehicles ever driven to the mountains arrived. There were ten large wagons, drawn by five mules each, loaded with goods to sell at the rendezvous."

Within the decade, others would push through to the Bear and Snake rivers, and to the Columbia. Thus did an old Indian and buffalo trail, used in part by French explorer Verendrye in 1742, Lewis and Clark in 1804, and linked together in 1824 by the discovery of South Pass in central Wyoming, begin its destiny as "the Oregon Trail."

The simple expedient of a road wide enough to accommodate wagons revolutionized the business of trading, often resulting in fortunes for such men as William Becknell and the thousands who thereafter freighted over the Santa Fe and Oregon trails. For as soon as overland travel became possible, a steadily increasing flood of immigration began. Adventurers, missionaries, traders, miners, and families eager for new beginnings prepared to make their way to Oregon—or California—which at that time meant the vast domain west of the Rocky Mountains.



Brigham Young counsels with Jim Bridger

The Mormons Leave the Midwest

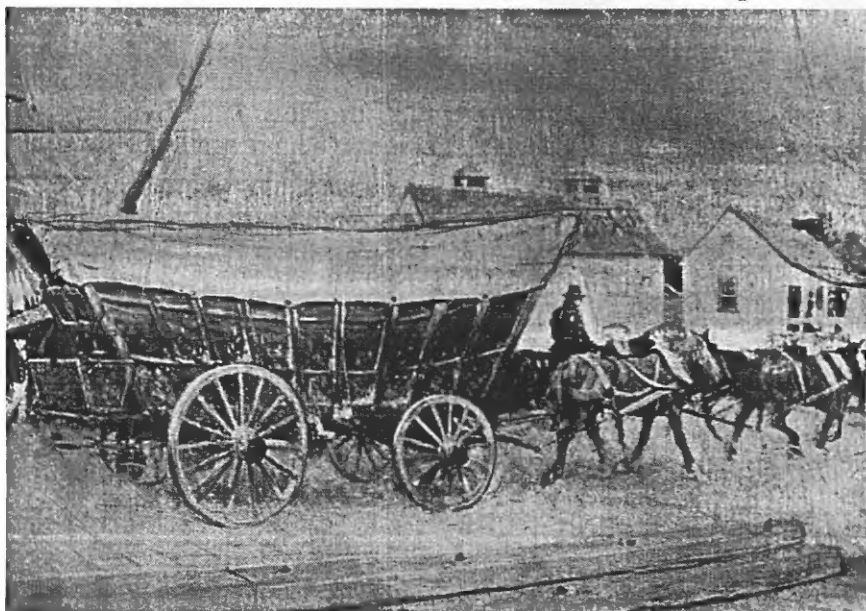
Many of the wagon trains that answered the age-old call of adventure were put together haphazardly and without proper leadership, but Mormon emigration was organized to a fine point. For months prior to their departure, the Saints prepared for the journey across the Plains. Every facet of their migration was taken into account: wagons, horses and oxen were procured; food that would not spoil was gathered; clothing that would withstand the rugged journey was prepared. Emigration in 1847 and 1848 was made with relatively few problems because of this excellent organization.

By 1849, thanks to successful settlement in the Salt Lake Valley and to the gold brought from California mines by returning Mormon Battalion soldiers, LDS leaders felt sufficiently secure to begin arrangements for the immigration of the nearly ten thousand members still in the Midwest, as well as some thirty thousand converts in England. In addition, they launched the great missionary project that would result in the emigration of thousands more. The problems of moving these new members and their belongings to Zion were to prove staggering.

The first step was the organization of the Perpetual Emigrating Company, set up to "promote, facilitate, and accomplish the emigration of the poor." Some twenty-five hundred individuals reached Utah in 1851 as a result of this help. Apostles Ezra T. Benson and Jedediah Grant, appointed to oversee the emigration, were instructed to "tell the people not to be afraid of the Plains, but to encounter them with any kind of conveyance that they can procure, with their handcarts, their wheelbarrows, and come on foot, pack and animal, if they have one, and no other way to come. . . ." So successful were their efforts that in 1852 twenty-one companies, averaging sixty wagons each, arrived in the Valley. The only Mormons remaining in the Midwest were those appointed to take charge of subsequent emigration. Their task proved to be one of the phenomenons of the westward movement, for while the early companies were somewhat accustomed to wagon travel, and usually possessed their own wagons, animals, weapons, implements and food for the long trek, immigrants who came from England, Scandinavia, Germany, etc., knew little or nothing about frontier travel and were entirely dependent on outfitting centers established by the Church.

Upon the arrival of an emigrant company at such a center—which was moved to each terminus as the railroad progressed westward—it was met by an agent who, at a cost of \$250 to \$500 each, provided their outfits, consisting of a wagon, two yoke of oxen, two cows and a tent. A system was ultimately worked out whereby emigrants could sew their own tents and wagon covers

went up and down hills. Great care was used in the construction: wheel hubs were made of Osage orange wood, and the spokes and



A Conestoga Freighter

felloes of well-seasoned white oak. The four-inch-wide tires usually had to be reset at least once in crossing the Plains because of shrinkage of the wood. The box was equipped with bows, over which was stretched one, or sometimes two, Osnaburg sheets, nailed down all the way around to make the wagon weatherproof. The cost of one of these wagons, ready for the road, was about \$190.¹⁰

During their period of operation—1855-1861—Russell, Majors and Waddell became the largest and most influential freighting firm to operate on the frontier. Their success in freighting military supplies for the War Department (including the tremendous amount brought across the Plains for Johnston's Army) was remarkable, but their other interests, such as stores, stage lines, express companies, and mail contracts, all proved to be unfortunate ventures, causing their premature bankruptcy.

Until the completion of the railroad, the prairie schooner reigned supreme. Thirty to fifty wagons made a freighting train, with a captain and assistant wagon master for each train. Each wagon had its driver. Also in the party were the extra hands such as night herders and the drivers of beef cattle. All were heavily armed with Colt pistols, which were kept ready for immediate use.

The wagon master was called the "bull-wagon boss," the teamsters were known as "bullwhackers," and the whole train

was designated a "bull-outfit." The train covered twelve to eighteen miles per day and at night, as protection against Indian raids, the wagons were arranged in the familiar oval or oblong shape, forming a corral, the tongues turned out. Sometimes a chain joined the fore and hind wheels of the adjacent wagons, the entrance and exit being at the ends. While the cooks prepared an evening meal, usually in a bake skillet, the teamsters unyoked their oxen and drove them to water and pasture. All the freighters except those assigned to guard the livestock were in bed by nine o'clock and the campfires were extinguished. At seven o'clock they were again headed westward.

An interesting story is told about one young freighter named Lewis W. Shurtliff, who drove four yoke of oxen from the Missouri River to Salt Lake City when he was sixteen years of age. Included is a fine description of the manipulation of the great wagons:

"From his vantage position on the left wheel mule, the driver was able to manipulate the brakes by a strap which was attached to the brake bar on one end and on the other to a ring on the back of his saddle. By pulling the strap the brake bar was thrown into a ratchet on the side of the wagon. This held the brakes on until the driver wished to release them.

"Since it was noon when Shurtliff's train arrived at North Platte, the freighters were soon busy in preparing dinner and feeding their mules. When these mundane activities were completed, each of the drivers swung himself into his saddle, took hold of the brake strap, signaled with the jerk line to the leader, and gave the command for the teams to get ready to go. Immediately the animals tightened their tugs and the long chain that reached from the lead team to the wagon. The driver shouted another command to the teams and at the same time gave the brake strap a vigorous pull which released the brake bar from the ratchet. The brake was off, the animals all pulled in unison, and the great caravan was under way. Again the cloud of dust arose and through it for a short time the people at the fort could see the canvas covering of the massive prairie schooners. Before long all that could be discerned was the heavy cloud of dust."

Until the mid-fifties the Indians made little trouble of an organized nature for the great caravans. They were more interested in the trinkets and other unusual paraphernalia belonging to the travelers. But when it became evident that the intruders were depleting the buffalo herds—the Indians' main source of food—trouble began. It then became necessary for the wagon trains to post night guards. Even the friendliest of Indians could not resist horses, and were not above making stealthy nocturnal visits to steal them.

that raged at this point in 1849 and 1850. The beautiful limestone shaft serves as a majestic monument to their memory.

Wyoming to Salt Lake City

Following the North Platte, the pioneer trail entered Wyoming over forested mountains, part of the Black Hills chain, that rise abruptly from the Plains to about five thousand feet. After the travelers enjoyed rest and refreshment at Fort Laramie, the wagons wound their way to the end of the Platte and the beginning of the Sweetwater, which they followed to South Pass. From this point, Wyoming streams, including the Sandy which sustained the pioneers as far as the Green River, flowed either through the latter to the Colorado River; through Snake River to the Columbia; or through Bear River to the Great Basin. The mountainous terrain made traveling considerably more difficult; in places it was necessary to lock the wagons. This was to be the trend during the remainder of the journey to the Great Salt Lake.

Prior to 1850, wagon trains followed the Mormon route from Fort Bridger through Echo and Emigration canyons, but early that year an advertisement in the *Deseret News* invited wagoners to take the "Golden Pass" through Parley's Canyon, on which a great deal of money and labor had been spent recently by the proprietor, Parley P. Pratt. It cut the distance down by about forty miles and avoided two great mountains. The toll was to be "50 cents per conveyance drawn by one animal, 75 cents for two animals, 10 cents per each additional draught, pack, or saddle animal, 6 cents per head for loose cattle and horses, and 1 cent per head for sheep."³²



Crossing the Great Plains

The excitement the wagoners experienced as they approached the growing city of Salt Lake was matched by the anticipation of the inhabitants who knew, as lumbering oxen came

into sight, sometimes wearing tinkling bells, that "States' goods had arrived. They would be bringing gingham for dresses, aprons and sunbonnets; boots and shoes and ready-made suits for men and boys; and all kinds of farm implements.

Main Street was vastly different then. Alternating with few business houses were fruit orchards and log or adobe dwellings, and there were only dirt sidewalks, often, like the street deep in dust or mud. Boys fished in the little grassy-banked ditches that meandered down the street.

Starved for some of the commodities they hadn't seen since leaving their homeland, the residents had learned that they must be first in line if they hoped to make purchases, for as soon as the stores opened their doors, a mad rush by the citizenry was the order of the day.

INTERSETTLEMENT FREIGHTING

With the coming of the railroad, the end of an era had been reached as far as freighting across the Plains was concerned. But since the settlers needed clothing, nails, glass, iron, printing presses, farming implements, equipment for gristmills, sawmills, blacksmith shops, and hundreds of other things, it would be well into the coming century before freight wagons ceased to move goods and merchandise between the settlements, and from the railroad terminus to all parts of the territory. That brings us to the matter of roads.

The trail to Utah had been pretty well designated by the time the Mormons crossed the Plains, but when colonization began, they faced new and often perplexing problems. Naturally, in spreading out from Salt Lake Valley, drivers chose what seemed to be the shortest and easiest routes to their destination. If they came to a rocky place they could not go around, a stop was made while the rocks were moved out of the way. If mud or sand were encountered, brush and tree branches made that section passable. One account states that in order to use a certain strip of muddy road in Wayne County, the settlers hauled logs and placed them side by side, a procedure called "corduroying."

In Daggett County the hard ridges were chosen for roads rather than the swales, where the sagebrush caught the snow and made drifts. If a deep wash intervened, the men would dig down the steep banks until they had made a passable grade. Sometimes a dugway was cut around a steep bluff; if the grades were too steep the drivers simply hitched on more horses.³³

A particular stretch of road between Price and Vernal presented many hazards to the hundreds of freighters who traveled over it. Lela N. Fackrell, describing the journey of her parents from Monroe to Vernal in 1905, has captured the uneasiness that

as a new thimble for Sister Hatch, some favorite snuff for Mr. Brown, or a supply of bottles and nipples for Marie, who was expecting her second baby.

I remember his wife (my grandmother) telling of the serving bowls she asked Harry to bring her. He brought three two-quart bowls, saying, "You can put a little bit in a big bowl, but you can't put a big bit in a little bowl." I'm certain Grandmother forgave him, for I remember seeing the bowls on her table filled with soup and dumplings, or partly filled with home-grown raspberries.

On his return trips from Richfield at Christmastime, Harry's wagon was filled with gifts, for the winters were very severe, and few people ventured from their homes. Harry's daughter Florence recalls that on one occasion he brought a pretty doll for little Sue, a deaf-mute girl in Koosharem, and hid it in the closet. Florence often went in there and lovingly held it. One day her father found her, and pretended to be very upset. But on Christmas morning Florence had a pretty doll just like Sue's.

Oranges, bananas and stick candy were a part of Harry's freight as he returned to Grass Valley. The children of Richfield had already received a share, and also a ride to the edge of town. His many acts of kindness gave Harry Payne the well-earned reputation of a faithful freighter to Richfield, and a favorite freighter for the home folks in Grass Valley.

—Cherril Payne Ogden

Freighting to the Uintahs

"How would you like to take a load of freight to Fort Thornburg?" Father asked me one evening in the early autumn of 1880 when I was nineteen years old. "There are four wagons to leave in the morning and I've told them you'd go along with my wagon. You can drive Jane and Polly. They are in good condition."

I was rather surprised at the idea, because it would be the first experience like that I'd had. I had heard of the many dangers that early freighters had encountered in crossing the tricky Green River, and I did not want to attempt it under any consideration.

"They'll know at Park City whether you'll have to cross the river or not, so you can find out there before you load up," my father advised me.

I offered to drive my own team, but my father's horses were in much better condition for such a strenuous trip. I was promised that during my absence my younger brother would not be allowed to drive or use my own team.

Early the next morning I was ready to start with the other men—Haymond Reynolds, Otto Green, both older than I, and Henry Boden with a friend, John Redmond, who went just to the trip, both of whom were my age.

The purpose of the trip was to freight food supplies to Fort Thornburg, located in the northwest part of Ashley Valley, Uintah County, where government soldiers had been sent to keep peace between the White River Indians who lived east of the Green River, and the Utes who were located west of the river. Both tribes at this time were on the warpath.

At Park City, which was a thriving little mining town, almost as large in the eighties as it is now, we loaded our four wagons. The freight consisted of strong wooden boxes filled with canned foods of all varieties—peas, beans, tomatoes, all kinds of fruits. We were to be paid by the tonnage we carried. Officially we were very definitely warned us not to be friendly with any Indians we might meet, that is, not to camp, eat or trade with them. I was relieved to find that we did not have to cross any river, so we were eager to be on the way.

Heber City, which was then a little town, was our next stop. When we passed a ranch house at the mouth of Daniel's Canyon I little realized that it would be the last house of any kind we would see until we reached Fort Thornburg. The roads (really just trails) were difficult to travel over through the canyon. It took us three days to reach the head of Daniel's Canyon.

The roads through Strawberry Valley were not so bad, and other freighters and Indians had traveled over them during the summer. One night we stopped near Soldier Creek. Not far away a tribe of Utes was camped. Haymond Reynolds could speak and understand a little of the Indian language, so he went to the Ute chief to inquire of the chances for our safety. Here began one of our most interesting and amusing incidents. These Indians were on their way to Salt Lake to get winter supplies. The old chief shook his head sadly and pointed to the group around the fire. For several days he had tried to get them to travel farther, but there they sat in a ring, gambling. Their game was somewhat like the one we play called "Up Jinks." They were divided into two sides with a pile of money and sticks between them. One side would pass a stick behind them, chanting aloud in a monotone while the other side watched. A player on the opposite side would point a finger and grunt to the person he thought had the stick. If he chose the right person, he was given a stick which could later be pawned for money.

We camped a ways from the Indians, but when darkness came we drew closer to watch the gamblers. When I thought it was time to go to bed I suggested that we go to our wagon.

scared, him scared," an old squaw laughed as she drew the attention of the group to me. I tried to tell her I wasn't afraid, but she repeated it, seeming to enjoy my embarrassment.

As we neared Red Creek we sensed trouble, for the stream was booming. It took six and eight of our best horses to pull one wagon across the stream and on to the top of the ravine. We met one man who was carrying his load on his back across the water and up the extremely steep hill. He had been with another party of freighters, but they had left him behind. Realizing that his team could not cross with the wagon loaded, he was having a dreadful time relieving their burden by carrying it on his back.

It had been Henry Boden's and my work each morning to catch the horses that had been turned loose the night before to find food, while the other men prepared breakfast. The morning we were to leave our camp, which was located then near Fort Duchesne, we arose very early in order to have the horses ready to leave soon enough for us to get to Fort Thornburg in good time. Henry and I hunted for several hours, but no horses could be found, not even their tracks.

We called for the other men's help and finally followed a stream to where it widened. There was a small green plain by the banks and here we found our horses grazing very contentedly. By this time it was too late for us to make the proposed trip, so we waited until the next morning to leave, finding our horses in the same place as on the previous morning.

The trip to Fort Thornburg was so easy that we arrived in plenty of time to unload our freight at the soldier houses and return to our former camp near Fort Duchesne that night. Our return trip was not difficult, but a great surprise awaited us when we met a man on horseback at the head of Daniel's Canyon who stated that word had been carried to Park City that the Indians had killed all of us. He had been sent by the government to verify the story.

It was a splendid trip, taking only twenty-one days, which was record-breaking time. My team, which had been sleek and fat on leaving, was now showing signs of the hard trip. The weather had been perfect. At Park City we encountered our first storm, and also met our Indian friends facing the snow and sleet. Here, also, our wages were paid, mine amounting to twenty-seven dollars. This I took to my father as was the custom, but he said, "You take it, you've earned it all right."

—George Smith Bailey

Dixie Christmas Freight

It was a bitter cold winter in Utah's Dixie in 1899. When President Lorenzo Snow had visited St. George the previous

spring and had viewed the drouth-stricken countryside, through a revelation in the St. George Tabernacle he had promised the people that if they paid an honest tithing the Lord would send moisture for their crops. The "windows of heaven" had literally been opened and rain and snow poured out in abundance.

Christmas was fast approaching and the winter winds blew a chilling blast. Kerosene (coal-oil) for their lamps, and other needed items, were running low. The only solution for obtaining more was for some courageous freighter to brave the wintery blast and make the sixty-five-mile trip to Modena—the nearest railroad terminal. Up until that year the nearest railroad station was at Milford, ninety miles distant. Freighters who were well versed in their business knew the perils that awaited anyone who attempted such an undertaking, so did not care to risk their own lives or the lives of their horses.

Two of the foremen who were engaged in the building of the railroad to Modena had come to St. George on business and had been detained for two or three weeks because of a blizzard which had laid snow to a depth of twenty feet in some places at the Mountain Meadows. Certain that they needed to get back on the job, they pleaded for someone to brave the winter's cold and take them to Modena, but nobody seemed to want to go. The dwindling household supplies and the plight of the foremen was the talk of the town.

Brig Lund, from St. George, had very recently started a business at Modena which he called a "forwarding business," in which he received all freight shipped to that point. He would pay the freight charges and store the goods until the merchants from the various settlements picked up their freight or asked him to deliver it for them.

Joe Farnsworth, also from St. George, ran a stage line and drove a hack (a big white-topped buggy drawn by a four-horse team) from St. George to the railroad. There were always two seats in this stagecoach and Joe could put in another if he had enough passengers to justify it. Joe was an experienced driver and he knew the country well, but the idea of driving out at this particular time did not strike him as the most pleasant thing to do. However, the two railroad foremen insisted that it was urgent for them to get back on the job and offered the fabulous sum of fifty dollars—twenty-five dollars apiece—if someone would transport them to Modena. After some consideration, Joe and Brig decided that they would try it. After all, fifty dollars was nothing to be sniffed at.

Meanwhile, supplies at the Co-op store were dwindling. Daniel D. McArthur, president of the St. George Stake, one of the founders of the Southern Utah Co-operative Association,

Another experience is of a lighter nature. As a group of freighters from Ephraim were preparing their evening meal, Chris "Cellar" Jensen made a boast that he could eat twenty-four eggs for supper. The crowd called him on it, and said that if he could eat that many eggs at one time they would pay for them. Chris ate the eggs and they paid for them. The next morning he ate six eggs of his own for breakfast.

Niels recalled how they filled their wagons as full of hay as possible; when the hay was gone the horses would return to their previous camp site to glean what they could find. The men followed and led them back to the wagons. This procedure took place every day.

As grandchildren of this energetic pioneer, we are grateful for the heritage left to us by our grandfather. We are proud of the strength and sturdiness of his rock granaries, where grain, flour and other commodities for his freighting trips were stored. The rock, taken from the Ephraim quarry, the bins, the beams—some of them measuring twenty-nine inches in circumference—the well-built stairs leading to the bins, his sturdy grub-box, which we discovered recently, seem to us as full of strength and beauty as they were over a hundred years ago when they were put together by the hands of this man of foresight. Were it not for the wheels of progress, which will no doubt remove many of these remnants of a pioneer era, we feel in our hearts they would last as long as time. —Ethel Thompson Lewis, granddaughter

FREIGHTING OUT OF STATE



Early-day Freight Train Utah, Idaho and Montana

Alexander Toponce, a native of France, said once, "I never went to school a day." Yet this Frenchman went to the old West, dealt with millions of dollars in gold, owned thousands of cattle and sheep, held title to nearly one hundred thousand acres of land, and hobnobbed with the great men of his era.

He was born in Belfort, France, November 10, 1839. His father's name was Pete Toponce. They decided to emigrate to America in 1846, when Alex was seven. The vessel they took was a sailing ship and they were forty-nine days making the trip to New York. Nearly all of his folks were seasick, especially his father. The water furnished them to drink was awful; it was enough to make anyone sick.

Alex found out that the sailors had good drinking water, were nearly out of chewing tobacco, so he stole tobacco from his father's pouch, took it up on deck and traded it to the sailors for water. For a piece big enough for a chew he could get a gal bucket of good water. This was his first business deal. And to these sailors he also took his first lessons in English. By the time they reached New York he knew all the cuss-words in the language. He found them hard to forget.

Arriving in New York in June, 1846, the Toponces took their boat up the Hudson River and through the Erie Canal to Buffalo, settling on a farm near that community. There were three sons and one girl in the family at that time, and, as was the custom of the French, the elder son received all the education and consideration. The stern French father was a strict disciplinarian. Alex said: "I was forced to do all the chores around the farm and was not sent to school. That spunked me and I ran away when I was nearly ten years old and I never did go back."

He worked on a farm until he was thirteen, then hired out as a teamster, learned logging and the sawmill business and eventually showed a clever hand at working with teams. In 1854 Alex went by train to the Mississippi River, then by boat to St. Louis where he teamed up with a friend, William Carman, and contracted to cut logs for eight to ten dollars a day.

In 1855 and 1856 he hired out to the famed freighting firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell and hauled government freight all the way to Santa Fe for fifteen dollars a month and board. Alex recalled: "They furnished us with an old flintlock musket and charged us with \$15 and when we returned the musket was credited with it."

One member of the firm, Alexander Majors, was a very religious man who neither drank, smoked or used profanity, and he expected as much from his drivers, who were handed a Bible and advised to practice its teachings. Alex Toponce signed a statement which read: "While I am in the employ of Russell, Majors & Waddell I agree not to use profane language, not to be drunk, not to gamble, not to treat animals cruelly, and not to do anything incompatible with the conduct of a gentleman. And I agree, if I violate any of the above conditions, to accept my discharge without any pay for my services." The rule on swearing was hard to keep, opined Alex, especially "when yoking up a mule or a mule and a mule oxen in the mornings."

The summer of 1857 Alex joined Albert Sidney Johnston's Army as an assistant wagon boss. Their freight train was loaded with supplies that the army used day to day and they kept right up with the main body. The route was up the Platte, the North Platte, the Sweetwater, over South Pass, down the Sandy

across to Fort Bridger. It was the old Oregon Trail and everything went well with them until they reached Bridger. There they heard that the Mormon cavalry had slipped around to the north and had captured some of their freight trains. Russell, Majors and Waddell had the government freight contract. The loss to the army was about five hundred thousand pounds of government supplies. This loss put the army upon short rations for the winter and spring, until they could be reached with supplies in the spring of 1858.

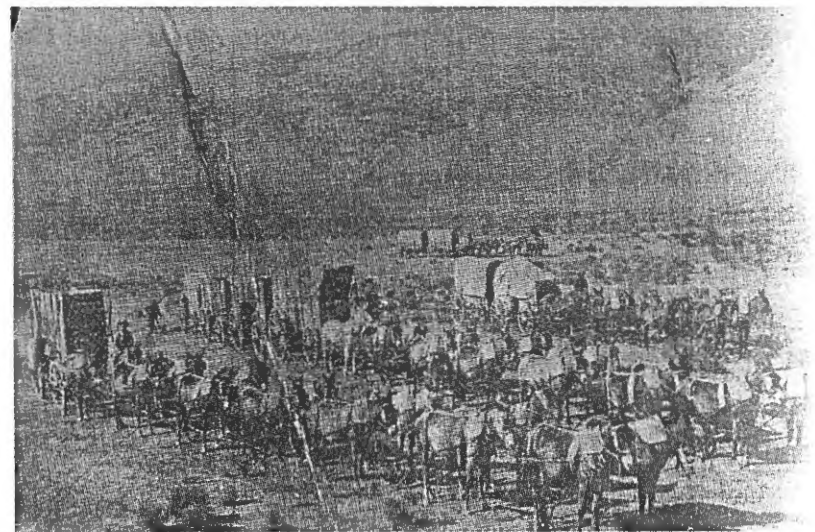
Johnston and his West Pointers woke up to the fact that they were engaged in a real war. Their scouts and spies brought them the news that the Utah militia, still known as the Nauvoo Legion, had about six thousand men under arms to oppose his three thousand, and had all the mountain passes fortified and mined. The Mormons made their "move south." They abandoned all the towns in northern Utah and, taking their families and stock, started south, leaving men in every town to set fire to all the houses just before the soldiers came. The worst feature was that they were really scared of the soldiers at first, until they learned that no harm was intended against them.

A story was being told among the soldiers of how Johnston acted when he heard that the war was to be settled peaceably. When word arrived from Washington that there was to be no real fighting, Johnston and Amith, his chief of staff, so it was said, were furious. Johnston took off his hat with the insignia of a general on it, threw it on the ground, stamped on it and said: ".....! such a government. Here we have starved and froze all winter and, now that we have these fellows right where we want them, they are going to get off without shedding so much as one drop of blood."

During the summer of 1858 Alex had charge of about nineteen hundred horses and mules that he herded in Butterfield and Bingham canyons. He soon got a chance to slip away from the herd and crossed the valley to visit Salt Lake City. The built-up part of the city was surrounded by a wall, partly of stone and partly of adobe. Only about one-third of the people had returned from the south. He saw many houses where kindling wood was still piled against the doors ready to be set on fire.

On the second day of February, 1863, Alex started from Denver for the gold diggings in Montana. In their camp were 163 men and one woman. Just a little past his twenty-third birthday, Alex had the honor of being elected captain of the train. They traveled all winter. The next fall, Alex brought his freighting outfit south to Ogden, Utah. He wrote: "Quite a place, the houses and a few stores along the main street. Entire town was surrounded by a mud wall about eight or nine feet high, with three

or four gates. It was not completed on the east side and the wall was nearly gone in some places." They went on to Salt Lake City, arriving about October 6, 1863, in time to see the semi-annual conference of the Mormon Church, which was held in the Tabernacle.



Early-day Freighting Outfits

At Salt Lake they loaded their wagons with flour, shovels, picks, and at Brigham City they added a lot of butter. Here, also, Alex saw a dressed hog hanging up behind a store by a man named Cotton Thomas. It was one of the biggest he ever saw. Dressed, it weighed a little over six hundred pounds. "Thomas," he said, "what will you take for the shoat?" "A little pig," says he, "will cost you six cents a pound, or thirty dollars." Alex bought it and paid him in greenbacks. There was no place in the wagon for it, so he got three men to help him. He put it right up on the top of the wagon cover, all spread out on top of the wagon bows, with the snout pointing toward Montana and with a rope tied to each leg and fastened down to the wagon bed. The carcass was already frozen and stayed frozen all the way to Montana.

When they pulled into Virginia City the day before Christmas, 1863, that hog attracted more attention than all the rest of the train. A stop was made in front of Alex Metzel's butcher shop and the butcher offered him a dollar a pound for the pig, which Alex accepted in gold dust. He reserved six pounds of the chops for their supper.

On the second day of January, 1864, Alex sold his freighting outfit and started from Alder Gulch with quite a company bound for Salt Lake. He had twenty thousand dollars in gold dust and in their train was fully one hundred twenty thousand dollars. Cold, bitter weather hit near present M